

LA PAZ/MOHAVE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

Summary

The Regional Boundary Task Force initially reviewed potential boundary modifications for the current La Paz/Mohave region. Specifically, they sought to address the question:

- Would Arizona children 0-5 and families residing in the current La Paz/Mohave region be better served if the region were split along current county lines, creating two regions: La Paz and Mohave?

Based on data review and community feedback the Regional Boundary Task Force recommends maintaining the current La Paz/Mohave regional boundaries, maintaining a single region that encompasses both counties.

Process & Data

Data for La Paz/Mohave was gathered to ensure guiding principles were adhered to and that community feedback on the potential impact of a recommended boundary change was included. The key question facing regional partnership council members, community partners and ultimately the Task Force was if the sheer geographic size of the current region was negatively impacting service delivery. If so, would a region split along county lines better serve families of children age 0-5?

The Task Force was provided demographic information on the make-up of the current region, as well as the demographic and funding picture of a potentially split La Paz/Mohave region. This data was also provided to both regional council members and community partners as part of a survey process to ensure all participating individuals were working from the same base of factual information. Specifically:

- The La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council (RPC) funds 15 strategies that cover quality and access to early care and education including professional development, family support and health. Of the 15 strategies funded by the La Paz/Mohave Regional Council, only one is not available in La Paz County – the Family Support for Children with Special Needs strategy. This is a new strategy for the regional council that started in SFY13.
- La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council also collaborates with the Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council to ensure service provision across boundaries. Specific examples include partnering on community outreach activities and coordinating training and professional development through the Court Team strategy with a focus on infants and toddlers in the child welfare system. The Colorado River Indian Tribes regional boundaries include the federally recognized tribal lands of the Colorado River Indian Tribes and the Town of Parker.
- The current La Paz/Mohave region includes 11,224 children age 0-5. If La Paz County became its own region, it would include approximately 412 children age 0-5.
- The SFY13 allocation for the La Paz/Mohave Regional Council is approximately \$3.65 million dollars. Of that amount, close to \$550,000 in regional funding is provided to La Paz County through the funded strategies described earlier. If the current region were split in to two regions, the allocation to a new La Paz County region would be approximately \$165,000.

Community Feedback

Eighteen individuals in the La Paz/Mohave region – either current regional council members or community partners – were sent a survey to get their view on the impact, positive or negative, of a potential regional split. Ten individuals responded. Survey highlights, which served as guideposts for the Task Force’s discussion, included:

- **100%** agreed that the La Paz/Mohave region’s funding plan works to address the needs of children and families across the entire region.
- **57%** agree the geographic size of the region impacts the regional council’s ability to address the needs of children and families in the region.
- **2 of 4** agreed a La Paz County region would have capacity – infrastructure and providers – to carry out the work of a regional partnership council.
- **2 of 3** believe a La Paz County region would have capacity to fill an eleven-member regional council.
- **7 of 9** recommend La Paz/Mohave remain as one region.

The 100% agreement that the current region’s funding plan looks to address needs region-wide was of particular interest to the Task Force. Further, Task Force members highlighted that 7 of the 9 individuals who responded to the survey recommended the region remain as one.

Additional Data & Task Force Discussion

First Things First also provided additional detail around the collaboration with, and boundaries of, the current La Paz/Mohave region and the Colorado Indian River Tribes (CRIT) region. The discussion of CRIT provided clarification as to why a singular La Paz region would have such a small 0-5 population – the Town of Parker is actually part of the CRIT region, not La Paz.

The Task Force also discussed the fact that the current La Paz/Mohave council has no current vacancies, travels throughout the region for meetings to ensure public engagement, and even with its vast geographic stretch – from Littlefield to Quartzite – the council has never had to reschedule a meeting due to a lack of quorum.

The feedback of a Task Force member who serves on the La Paz/Mohave regional council provided additional context to the discussion. He shared that while there is always a wish in small communities to increase that community’s voice, the current regional council has made concerted efforts to provide the same level of services in La Paz County as are provided in the much larger Mohave County. As a result, he recommended the region remain as one.